Phantom Load

Introduction to Phantom Load

Phantom load is what people call energy that is being used by an appliance when turned ‘off’. There are many different names that you can call this waste of energy but I am just going to refer to it a phantom load or standby power. Not very many Americans are aware of phantom loads that are taking place in their own home. There are many ways that phantom loads scam you out of your energy and money, most times with out you even knowing that little by little your money is going through the cords of almost all of your appliances that have a clock, screen, standby mode, or other things that I will tell you about latter on. In this research I will also explain some very simple, easy, and efficient ways to prevent your sneaky appliances from conning you out of your electricity and money.

Prevention

A great way to prevent energy from being used when something is not on is to just unplug it. If you don’t want to bother with unplugging all your household items individually you can plug multiple into one power strip and then just switch that ‘off’ that way you don’t have to unplug each item individually. Most ENERGY STAR brand appliances use only 40% of the energy as standard models. When battery chargers are not being used or the batteries are fully charged unplug them. Did you know that for every 7 cents you spend on electricity bills 4 of those cents are from standby power usage? The U.S. spends more than 3 billion dollars in just standby energy each year, if we could prevent all of that think of how much better and cleaner our earth could be. Standby power is an easy thing to prevent, you just unplug your items and then you don’t have to pay for power your not using.

Results

When I was testing, and looking on the Internet I was able to identify some things about how a phantom load strikes. There are certain traits that all phantom load-embracing appliances have. If you can identify those traits then that will help you stop the right appliances. Any appliance or item has a remote will use phantom load power because the electronic device (receiver) that is always looking for your remotes signal. If the item has a standby mode it will use power because there is usually a little light that tells you that it is in standby mode and because it is always waiting, holding that electrical charge in the cord waiting for you to flip the switch or push the button to turn it on. When an appliance has a display screen that is on when you are not using it that display screen will use your energy if it is telling you what time it is, or like my stereo it tells me what brand it is and that it is in demo mode so the lights are always flashing, and the iPod dock is glowing, and it has a stand by mode, but sense I’ve been doing this research I’ve moved the plugin for the stereo and then when I flip a switch it goes in to a ‘hard off’ so that all electricity going to it is shut off. If any of your appliances have these traits they have a phantom load; therefor they are using your money to run something that you thought was off. For example your TV’s are wasting your money because the little box that you point your remote at is always searching for a signal from the remote to come in. Things with a clock like stereos, microwaves, cable boxes, and anything else with a clock use your energy as well because they are always on and keeping your time up to date. Any thing that has any of those traits is always using your energy.

Awareness

Very few people know about the phantom loads are occurring in there own home. For the some that do know what is happening in their electrical cords, that their energy is being used even when the appliance isn’t most think nothing of it, and that is what is wasting our money. Over all about 6% of all the energy used in America is phantom load energy. All the phantom load energy could be used to power a lot of other things; America’s phantom load alone could power small countries. Our phantom load money as billions of dollars that is being used by our country to go towards absolutely nothing, other than giving the electrical companies more of our money that they don’t need.

Conclusion

Preventing, or at least being more aware of the phantom loads through out your house and your life will benefit not only you but also the world to because by using less energy they have to burn the fossil fuels, which is definitely not the best for our environment. In the end I think that if you follow some of the easy steps to save you money and energy; use power cords, try to use brands of items that you use often that don’t use as much energy, and remember if your not sure if it has a phantom load or not just unplug the item, even if you just do it at night before you go to bed or before you leave for a vacation, if every one did that it could cut our unnecessary spending in half and help the environment.